

**Newburyport Public Library  
Board of Directors  
Minutes Virtual Meeting  
May 19, 2021**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:19 PM by Ms. Valeriani. Roll call was taken.

**Present:** Kathy Carey, James Connolly, Councilor Jared Eigerman, Gary Gorski, Christian Hansen, Sarah Holden, Steve Moore, Susan Shefte, Sarah Spalding and Elizabeth Valeriani.

Giselle Stevens, Head Librarian and Sara Kelso, Assistant Head Librarian and Acting Recording Secretary.

**Absent:** Mayor Holaday and Marcia Edson.

**Public Comments:** There were no additional participants in the meeting, though an observer did attend part of the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the April 21, 2021 virtual meeting were unanimously approved.

**Next Meeting**

The next board meeting will take place June 16, 2021. The June 16, 2021 meeting will be virtual. No meetings are scheduled for July or August 2021.

**Head Librarian Report**

**Library Story**

Ms. Stevens shared a nice thank you note from a family that has checked out over 400 books during the pandemic.

Another family set a family reading goal during the pandemic and reported reading 801 books together.

**Budget**

Ms. Stevens is scheduled for the proposed FY22 library municipal budget workshop with the City Council Budget and Finance Committee on May 20, 2021. The proposed library budget meets the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) and the minimum

materials expenditure requirement set by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). City Council will vote on the budget on June 22, 2021.

### **Building and Grounds**

A new door counter has been purchased and will be installed in June. Patron counts are required by MBLC.

HVAC maintenance and repair has been completed for the cooling season.

A number of projects are underway in preparation for implementing the June reopening plan, including removal of the Patio Pickup window, reconfiguration of the Circulation office, removal of lower level and third floor water fountains, reconfiguration of Reference area space for the public copier, and furniture review and storage.

Some lawn maintenance and landscaping will take place over the spring and summer. The irrigation system will also be repaired.

### **Personnel**

The open Adult and Reference Services Staff Librarian position has been filled. Ms. Willwerth has been hired and will start on May 24, 2021.

Ms. Sceery retired from the Library after 14 years as a Library Technician. This opening has been posted internally with the AFSCME union and the external posting will begin on May 22, 2021.

Ms. Marks, Senior Librarian and Head of Borrower Services, announced her retirement effective in July after 14 years at the Library. Ms. Senior also announced that she will also be retiring in July after 18 years as a Library Technician.

Ms. Marks is the 2021 Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) Para-Librarian Advocate of the Year. She received this award virtually at the annual MLA Conference this week.

### **Policy**

There were no policies to be reviewed this month.

### **Staff Training**

Ms. Stevens attended a training for City department heads on discrimination and harassment in the workplace. All City staff will have the opportunity to attend this training over the next six months.

## **Friends of the Library**

The Friends will hold a small outdoor pop-up book sale under the tent at the Senior Community Center on Saturday, June 12, 2021. The Friends will not be collecting donations from the public for this sale. The Friends are hopeful that a fall sale can be held at the library this year.

The Friends have launched a quarterly online newsletter. Sign up for the newsletter on the Friends website: <http://www.newburyportfol.org/connect/>.

The Friends have launched their annual membership campaign.

## **Old Business**

### **New Website Project**

The new website project is currently in the development phase. The vendor is building the website with the approved design.

### **Board Biographies**

Ms. Stevens discussed the template for Library Board biographies. Board members will submit a short biographical entry that includes: name, term of service, educational and professional background, civic engagement, an optional photo, and a comment on their involvement and love of the Library. Ms. Stevens requested initial drafts from NPL Board members by September 2021. Biographies will be retained in the Library Archival Center.

Ms. Stevens has distributed an updated contact list to NPL Board members and has requested that members review and submit any necessary corrections.

### **NPL Building Project 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Anniversary bookmarks and the story walk installed in front of the Library have been well received. The story walk will remain in place until the end of May 2021. The story walk will be installed again for the week of Yankee Homecoming.

## **New Business**

### **Library Phased Reopening Plan**

In response to new directives from the CDC and the Governor, Ms. Stevens and Ms. Kelso are working with library department heads to plan for changes in library services and the delivery of those services at NPL. Changes will be implemented over the next few weeks and some limitations will continue. Patio Pickup will close May 28, 2021. Masks will be required until at least June 15, 2021, at which time all library staff will be fully vaccinated. The Library will defer to the City Health Department and Mayor's office

for further direction. The Library intends to provide a welcoming space for all visitors with thoughtful placement of furniture and arrangement of available services. The Children's Room has reopened for walk-in browsing. This space is limited by capacity, which will likely continue throughout the summer. The Teen Loft area may also be opened with limitations based on capacity also. Meeting rooms will not reopen at this time. Virtual programming will continue. Some in-person programming may resume after July 1, 2021. Ms. Stevens will share details of all milestone changes for June and July with the board as soon as plans are finalized. Regular library hours (9:00 am to 9:00 pm Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am-5:00pm Fridays and Saturdays) will resume by July 1, 2021.

Ms. Carey inquired about general staff feelings about impending changes. Ms. Stevens cited positive feedback from staff. Ms. Stevens noted that changes will be incremental due to logistical limitations with staff and patron safety and expanded access in mind. Ms. Carey inquired about newspaper access in the Reading Room. Ms. Stevens indicated that resuming access to newspapers will take place around June 15, 2021 after subscriptions can be resumed and furniture can be replaced in the Reading Room.

Mr. Moore inquired about continued access to Patio Pickup for hesitant patrons. Ms. Stevens stated that patrons will have an option for front-door delivery if they are reluctant to come inside after Patio Pickup is removed.

Mr. Gorski inquired if staff vaccinations were required by the City. Ms. Stevens stated that the City does not have a policy or requirement in place at this time. HIPAA regulations preclude Ms. Stevens from inquiring about this status. Ms. Stevens expects most staff will be fully vaccinated by mid-June, however. All staff will have the option to continue wearing a mask in the library. Plexiglass barriers at service desks will remain in place for now.

### **Archival Center CPA Grant HVAC Project**

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) grant-funded project to replace the Archival Center HVAC units will go out to bid in the beginning of June 2021.

### **Calendar**

The Library will be closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday, May 29, 2021 through May 31, 2021 for the Memorial Day holiday.

The NPL continues to offer virtual adult programming, including a cooking series, book groups and an author talk with James Patterson and Mike Lupica (May 26, 2021).

### **April Statistics**

Patio Pickup use is decreasing as more patrons are coming into the building to browse. Craft pickup has also decreased with students returning in person to school. Museum pass usage is increasing as more patrons are vaccinated and museums open with less restrictions.

**Library Presentations**

Ms. Stevens will present information about the Library to the Rotary Club at their meeting on June 15, 2021.

Ms. Stevens is currently serving on a MBLC Committee reviewing the Handbook for hiring Library Directors.

**Other Business**

No additional business was discussed at the meeting.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Valeriani introduced a motion to adjourn at 6:04 pm. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 pm.